She wonders about the people who own these homes, whether their wealth is something they take for granted or whether they get down on their knees to thank God for their good fortune... In the week she has been with the Leveretts, God hasn’t come up once, and América asks herself if rich people need him as much as poor people do.

—*from América’s Dream* by Esmeralda Santiago

Our next workshop, no one understood what my sublimated love sonnet was all about, but Rudy’s brought down the house. Suddenly, it seemed to me, not only that the world was full of English majors, but of people with a lot more experience than I had. For the hundredth time, I cursed my immigrant origins. If only I too had been born in Connecticut or Virginia, I too would understand the jokes everyone was making on the last two digits of the year, 1969; I too would be having sex and smoking dope; I too would have suntanned parents who took me skiing in Colorado over Christmas break, and I would say things like “no shit,” without feeling like I was imitating someone else.

—*from How the García Girls Lost their Accent* by Julia Alvarez

My mother says that Abuela Celia’s had plenty of chances to leave Cuba but that she’s stubborn and got her head turned around by El Líder. Mom says “Communist” the way some people say “cancer,” low and fierce. She reads the newspapers page by page for leftist conspiracies, jams her finger against imagined evidence and says, “See. What did I tell you?”

—*from Dreaming in Cuban* by Cristina García

I am not here. They’ve forgotten about me when the photographer walking along the beach proposes a portrait, un recuerdo, a remembrance literally. No one notices I’m off by myself building sand houses. They won’t realize I’m missing until the photographer delivers the portrait to Catita’s house, and I look at it for the first time and ask—When was this taken? Where?

—*from Caramelo* by Sandra Cisneros

I had expected a different father, one about seven feet tall with enough money to buy our entire barrio, but this one was an average height with an average face... a father is a hard thing to compass.

—*from This is How You Lose Her* by Junot Diaz

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**
This course provides a glimpse into contemporary Latino/Latina literatures (written in the last 25 years) by examining selected texts and authors with the intent of making connections between the written text and the context from which it emerges. That is to say,
we will examine the messages embedded in the works of Latino/a authors, as producers and reproducers of ethnic and community identity, as well as reflections of a broader political consciousness and broader social dynamics. Moreover, we will study these texts as testimonies of material conditions, struggles, and resistance and, ultimately, as potential agents for social change. Even though the presence and history of Latinos/as in the United States extends beyond literature, we can find articulated in it clues that may help us understand the intricacies of (a) specific community(ies) and how they are positioned within the larger structures of US society. Although these are works of fiction, I hope you engage with these texts (written by a Puerto Rican woman, a Dominican woman, a Cuban woman, a Chicana, and a Dominican man, respectively) and look at them as documents articulating the triumphs and tribulations of different groups of people labeled “Latinos(as),” as well as their interactions with other groups of people in and out of the US.

**Learning Goals:**

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- identify and analyze pieces of contemporary Latina/o literature in the United States.
- identify and discuss key themes and issues (such as immigration, citizenship, ethnicity, etc.) developed by contemporary Latina/o writers.
- understand that although they are often mistakenly seen as one, different groups comprise the category “Latina/o,” and these groups actually come from different cultures and have different needs and standings in our society.
- make connections between the context from which these pieces of literature emerge, and the themes addressed in them.
- “read” cultural specificities as discussed by the authors read during the semester.
- understand that literature is a sociologically relevant tool/text.

**Note:** As a Writing in the Major course [M], this class complies with the requirements of this particular designation by assigning a considerable amount of writing and distributing the writing throughout the term. Because of its [M] status, this course requires both an inordinate amount of reading and writing.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES:**

**Books—listed in alphabetical order by author:** (available at The Bookie)

Note: Having access to the books is crucial. In order to be able to succeed in this class, you need the books. There is no way around it. And, given the world of hyper-connectivity we live in, “The Bookie ran out of books” or “Amazon hasn’t shipped my book yet” will not constitute an excuse for not having your reading summaries ready when they are due.

Note 2: You need to bring the book we are reading to class every day.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Class Attendance and Participation: Attendance and participation at every class are required and valuable. Class will mostly consist of a discussion of the texts, and I will expect you to come to class having completed the readings and willing to engage with the material. Your contributions to class discussion will become part of your participation points. It is also to your advantage to listen closely and take copious notes during our
discussions, since I'll expect you to apply key concepts and ideas discussed in class in your in-class assignments.

You are allowed up to two absences (excused or otherwise), after which you will lose ten (10) points for every regular lecture class missed. Only approved and documented university excuses will be exempted from this rule (for athletes, this means forms from the Athletic Department handed in before the absence; for students traveling to conferences or competitions, I will expect a letter from the professor with whom you are traveling before you leave town).

I will be looking for both quantity and quality in your contributions to class discussion. You should answer the guiding questions I prepared for each day of readings and they should help you in your contributions to class discussion.

Finally, disruptive behavior will make you lose points for attendance and participation. The following are examples of disruptive behavior: (1) arriving late to class and/or leaving early, (2) talking to classmates during lecture, (3) reading the newspaper, (4) playing with your laptop computer, (5) texting, etc. If you engage in any of those behaviors during class (or in any other behavior that I deem disruptive), you will lose points from attendance and participation at my discretion and without any warning. Attendance and participation will be worth a total of 100 points.

Note: I will take attendance every day. If you come to class after I am finished taking attendance, your absence will remain.

Reading Reflections: You are required to keep typed reflections of the readings assigned for each day (there is a total of 29 entries). In order to get full credit, each entry must be prefaced with the following information in the following strict order: (1) your first and last name, (2) date the entry is due (not the date you are writing the entry), (3) title of the book (in bold letters), (4) pages in the text where the reading is found, and (5) entry number (entries should be numbered consecutively, and the number of the entry in your summary should correspond to the number of the reading in the schedule). For instance, the heading for the first entry of the semester, which is due on August 28th, should have the following information:

Name
08/28/17
América’s Dream
Pp. 1-47
Entry #1

I will deduct 2 points for every item missing from or misplaced in the heading. Each entry (reading) should include its own heading and entry number (as they appear in the schedule). Each entry should include two paragraphs: one including a summary of the readings for the day, and another paragraph including an analysis. The analysis for the entries may be theoretical, social and/or political (avoid personal “feelings”). I will collect
the reflections every day in class. At the end of the week, I will grade one random entry from the readings for that time period. Each graded entry will be worth 20 points for a total of 260 points at the end of the semester (13 entries). Although I will not read and grade the additional entries, they will still be worth up to 5 points each for a total of 90 points (18 entries) at the end of the semester. The maximum score for the reading summaries is 350 points.

✓ What constitutes an entry? If you go to the schedule toward the end of the syllabus, you will notice that I have assigned readings for each day. Assigned readings are numbered (consecutively, from 1-31). The entry number in the heading must correspond to the reading number in the schedule.

✓ The Reading Reflections will be collected in class. If you miss class one day and your entry is not with those of your classmates, you will lose your points for that day’s reflection.

✓ I will not accept late Reading Reflections nor will I accept reading Reading Reflections brought to my office, sent over e-mail, or left in my mail box. Check your printer for ink, your computer for bugs, and your brain for memory ahead of time. Late entries are equivalent to no entries at all. You may, however, turn in your entries early by bringing them to class on the day before they are due. I will NOT accept entries on electronic mail or left in my office mailbox (regardless of whether they are early, on time, or late).

Bottom line: (1) Turn in all your entries; and (2) Turn them in on time.

In-class Assignments: The purpose of the in-class assignments is twofold: first, on a basic level, they are designed to synthesize your interpretation of the readings with our class discussions. On a broader level, they are also designed to make you reflect on issues of migration, language use, economic inequality, and ethnic identity in the Chicana(o)/Latina(o) communities. You will have the opportunity to re-write one of the first 4 assignments after I grade it, in order to attain a higher score. You can choose which assignment to re-write and here are the instructions:

(1) Turn in a typed re-write along with the original, graded write up.
(2) It must be turned in no later than Wednesday, November 29th.
(3) The re-write must incorporate the feedback I gave you when I graded it.

There will be five in-class assignments spread throughout the semester (see the schedule for specific dates) and each is worth 100 points. However, we will drop the lowest score, so there is a total of 400 points combined.

Final Essay: On Friday, November 17, I will hand out two questions. You will choose one and write a 7-10 page essay answering the question (not counting attachments, and not including the reference page), using at least two academic sources dealing with the role of literature in exposing and documenting ethnic inequalities. Only books, academic journal articles, or a combination of the two shall serve as academic sources. Your essay
must be typed, double-spaced, and the pages must be numbered. It must also, of course, include an introduction and a conclusion. A title (other than “Final Essay” or anything along those lines) is also necessary to get full credit. You will be expected to turn in your paper on the assigned due date (December 6) in class. As with the reading reflections, I will not accept final papers brought to my office, sent over e-mail, or left in my mailbox. The essay is worth 150 points.

COURSE POLICIES:
Cellular Phones and other Communication/Electronic Devices: Turn your cell phones and electronic devices off before coming to class. That includes laptop computers—even if your computer lacks an internet connection, and any other electronic device utilized to communicate with the world outside our classroom. Of course, MP3s, tablets, and other gadgets used for entertainment are also prohibited. So are ear buds and headphones of any kind—put them away before class starts. The world can survive without getting a hold of you for 50 minutes. And you will also survive without knowing what’s going on outside the classroom for a few minutes. If, for a reason I cannot fathom at this point, you forget to neutralize your communication device, and it does go off during class, you will annoy the heck out of me, and will have the option of (1) turning it off immediately, or (2) handing it to me and letting me answer it. You will take full responsibility for what happens when/if you allow me to answer your phone. If your device goes off more than once during the semester, I will deduct points (at my discretion and without notifying you) from your attendance and participation points. I may also ask you to leave the classroom.

✓ If I catch you “texting” during class, and in addition to taking points off, I will confiscate your phone and will make you stand in front of the entire class to share with your classmates why you were texting, who you were texting, and the content of your message. You will also lose points for attendance and participation (see explanation above). Finally, under those circumstances, I reserve the right to keep your phone in my office until one of two things happens: (1) you drop the class, or (2) the semester ends.

✓ But what if I want to take notes using my computer or tablet?—you may ask. Here is my standard answer: for over a century now, students have been able to take notes using a pad of paper and a pen or a pencil. This method has worked for generations of students, so it will work for you as well. Only students with permission from the Access Center are exempted from this rule.

Academic Etiquette Policy: Class will begin promptly at 10:10 a.m. Arriving late and leaving early is not tolerable. Do not attempt to carry on private conversations with other students during lectures or discussions. Finally, toleration for different opinions voiced in class is essential, and I expect all students to treat each other respectfully. Name calling and other forms of verbal harassment will not be tolerated and will result in either the student being asked to leave the class and/or in receiving penalty points at my discretion.
**Disability Accommodation:** Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center (Washington Building, Room 217). All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center.

**Campus safety plan/emergency information:** In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the following WSU-provided websites:
- [http://safetyplan.wsu.edu](http://safetyplan.wsu.edu) (Campus Safety Plan);
- [http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies](http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies) (Emergency Management Website); and
- [http://alert.wsu.edu](http://alert.wsu.edu) (WSU Alert Site).

**Academic Integrity Policy:** In all instances, you must do your own work. Otherwise, you are being dishonest. There is no excuse for plagiarism, for submitting another person's work, ideas, or wording as your own, or for not doing your own work. In simple terms, plagiarism is the act of using another person's words or work without giving them credit for it. Relatedly, academic dishonesty involves not doing the work you are supposed to do on your own and claim you did. If you do not understand the seriousness of plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty, and the importance of avoiding those behaviors, I would recommend that you read *WSU’s Academic Integrity Policy* (WSU Student Handbook, WAC 504-26-202—Acts of Dishonesty and WAC 504-26-010--Definitions). Plagiarism and academic dishonesty, whether intentional or unintentional, may result in a grade of "F" for the assignment in question, or a grade of "F" for the entire course, at my discretion. Should there be any suspicion of plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty, I will discuss the situation with you first and then with the Chair of the Department of Critical Culture, Gender, and Race Studies. I will then alert the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in a conduct hearing and university sanctions against you. If you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty, contact me and I will clarify it for you.

**About Grammar and Writing:** You are in college and taking a writing in the major course, which means that at this point in your academic career, you must be able to communicate coherently and effectively. In order to do that, you must be able to demonstrate a certain level of technical ability in your writing. With that in mind, here are a few goofs that will make you lose points in the written work assigned for this class (i.e., Reading Reflections and In-Class Assignments):
- **Calling authors by their first name.** Always use their full name or their last name, and **never** their first name alone.
- **Misuse of the following words:**
  - affect/effect
  - dominate/dominant
  - for/four
  - its/it’s
  - quite/quiet
  - there/they’re/their
  - then/than
• to/too/two
• weather/whether
• woman/women
• your/you’re

✓ Made up words like irregardless (it’s irrespective or regardless) or supposably (it’s supposedly); misspelled words like ethnicities (spelled ethnicities) or privilege (spelled privilege); and incongruent pairing of words like “should of” (it’s should’ve or should have).

✓ Each one of these offenses (or offenses like them) will make you lose 2 points every time they appear in your work.

In order to streamline grading, I have designed a key for corrections. I am including it here to let you know why you had points taken off. When I return your work after being graded, they will have codes instead of corrections, here is the key to decipher what I am telling you:

✓ Awk → Awkward sentence structure
✓ IH → Incomplete/inaccurate Heading (for reading summaries)
✓ SP → Spelled wrong
✓ Huh? → I have no idea what you are trying to say
✓ WW → Wrong word
✓ IS → Incomplete Sentence
✓ IT → Incomplete Thought
✓ InSt → Inaccurate statement/bogus fact/unsupported claim
✓ ISum → Incomplete Summary (for reading summaries)
✓ Ram → Rambling, beside the point, not relevant to point/topic/reading in question
✓ PS → 2 points as specified in syllabus (goofs in previous check point)
✓ Grm → Grammar needs a lot of work.

**Bottom Line:** Mind your grammar and write coherently, and accurately.

**About Terminology:** In both your written and verbal engagement in this course it is NOT permissible to use either of the following terms:

✓ *Colored person/people/man/woman, etc.* Things are colored. People are of color, or alternatively, African-American, Black, Latino, Asian-American, etc. “Colored people” or “coloreds” are offensive, derogatory, archaic terms that were meant to create a linguistic inferiority about, and maintain and reinforce social inequality in relation to non-Whites. It comes from a time in which non-White groups were seen as less than human, and thus, does not mean the same thing as people of color.

✓ *The white man.* There is NO one, singular white man on which racism and racial inequality can be blamed, nor can the phrase possibly stand for all white men, so the term lacks critical meaning. Using the term demonstrates a relatively unsophisticated, uncritical understanding of historical and sociopolitical systems that articulate race and create and/or maintain racism. Systems of domination cannot be reduced to the figure of one person (even a symbolic one). In this class you are working to develop a much
more critical and complex understanding of racism and other interrelated systems, structures, histories, and institutions of inequality. You may refer to any number of things, including: empire, colonization, white privilege, capitalism, white supremacy, and systemic racism, all of which are much more specific, critical, and accurate.

Any use of either of these terms in your written work or classroom discussion will result in a loss of points in the specific written work in which it occurs, or your attendance and participation grade, respectively.

The ONLY exception to the above policy is when you are referencing or citing an author, a character, etc. who is using/discussing the term. In an instance like that, the quote should be properly referenced or cited to determine its origin.

About Earning your Grade: As you may have been able to gather from the detailed syllabus I have provided for you, I expect you to do your work as laid out here. Thus, the only thing you can do to get a passing grade in the class is complete the work assigned in the syllabus on time and without excuses. In order to pass the class (i.e., to obtain at least a C-) you need to do two fundamental things: (1) follow the syllabus, and (2) do the assigned work well. In order to do better (i.e., to obtain at least a B), you need to follow the syllabus and do the assigned work very well. And in order to receive an excellent grade in this class (i.e., at least an A-) you need to follow the syllabus and excel in your work. Thus, only an equal combination of industriousness and quality of work will guarantee your grade. What does this mean? I am basically warning you that the level of effort you put into the class, may not necessarily correspond to the quality of your work. That is, sometimes a person’s best effort grants him/her a C. I will, then, tolerate no drama at the end of the semester invoking fallacies such as “I worked really hard in this class and therefore deserve a better grade; or last-minute pleas such as “I wanted an A in this class, but I’m actually getting a C-, can you do something to help me improve my grade?” Here are four points to keep in mind:

(1) Effort is not necessarily correlated to a “better grade;”
(2) You have an entire semester to work on improving your grade, so last-minute efforts are disingenuous and undignified;
(3) My responsibility as a professor is to educate you, not to help you earn a grade; and
(4) The grade you obtain in this class will depend entirely on having followed the syllabus to the letter, and equally important, the quality of your work—nothing more, nothing less.

About the Syllabus and Unnecessary Questions: Everything that you need to know is laid out in this document pretty clearly. Therefore, if you send me an email asking a question that can be answered by reading the syllabus, I will send a reply simply saying: “syllabus.” And no, I will not tell you what page to look. It is your responsibility to read and become familiar with the syllabus.

About Electronic Correspondence: Speaking of emails, the college experience is meant to prepare you for the professional world. As such, you must start practicing professional etiquette. That begins with learning how to address your interlocutor in an electronic message correctly. Thus, here are four choices of salutations you may use when you write
an e-mail to me: “Dear Dr. Lugo;” “Dear Professor Lugo;” “Hello/Hi Dr. Lugo;” or “Hello/Hi Professor Lugo.” Note: Any messages sent to me without a salutation or with an improper salutation (such as “hey,” “yo,” or “hi” etc.) will be sent to the trash bin without a reply.

**Last but Not Least (or the “How is that my problem” clause):** I am a pretty busy person, and as a professor, my role in this class is to teach you about Latina/o literature, and to generally prepare you for the professional world. I feel the need to warn you, then, that often times I will have a standard response to many of your requests or “conflicts.” The response will usually be a variation of: “How is that my problem?” For instance, if you tell me that your parents are going on a vacation to Cabo San Lucas during the week we are having one-on-one meetings, and they want you to come along (and already bought your tickets), I will ask you: How is that my problem? Similarly, if your best friend is getting married in California and you want to go to the wedding a day you are supposed to be taking an in-class assignment: How in the world is that my problem? Or, if your roommate/friend needs a ride to the Spokane airport and you decide to take him/her and miss class: not my problem! Thus, before you raise any issue with me, understand that your personal matters should bear no effect on me or on how this class is conducted. It is your responsibility to conform to and abide by the schedule and the syllabus. But I will take this opportunity to say this: please consider that if you decide to bask under the Mexican sun, or eat wedding cake in “sunny California,” or go to Spokane during class time, the activity will come with a cost to your grade. It is ultimately up to you to make your own decisions, but decisions, even in college, have consequences attached to them. Keep that in mind.
FALL 2017 SCHEDULE

✓ Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I still reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance.

✓ This syllabus tells you the dates by which you need to have the material read and Reading Reflections ready.

Mon Aug 21:  Introduction to the Course
Note: Read your syllabus carefully today (after leaving class).

Wed Aug 23:  Latinas/os in the US and a few Key Concepts

Fri Aug 25:  Puerto Rico and the US

Week 2

Mon Aug 28:  América’s Dream
Read 1. Pp. 1-47

Wed Aug 30:  América’s Dream
Read 2. Pp. 48-110

Fri Sept 01:  América’s Dream
Read 3. Pp. 111-147

Week 3

Mon Sept 04:  Labor Day Holiday

Wed Sept 06:  América’s Dream
Read 4. Pp. 148-198

Fri Sept 08:  América’s Dream
Read 5. Pp. 199-242

Week 4

Mon Sept 11:  América’s Dream

Wed Sept 13:  América’s Dream
Read 7. 292-325

Fri Sept 15:  In-class Assignment #1
### Week 5

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<tr>
<td>Mon Sept 18:</td>
<td>The Dominican Republic and How the García Girls Lost their Accent</td>
<td>8. Pp. 3-39</td>
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<td>Read</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Sept 27:</td>
<td>How the García Girls Lost their Accent</td>
<td>12. 195-238</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri Sept 29:</td>
<td>How the García Girls Lost their Accent</td>
<td>13. 239-290</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Oct 04:</td>
<td>Cuba and Dreaming in Cuban</td>
<td>14. Pp. 3-48</td>
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<td>Fri Oct 06:</td>
<td>Dreaming in Cuban</td>
<td>15. Pp. 49-95</td>
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<td>Dreaming in Cuban</td>
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### Week 9

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<td>Mon Oct 16</td>
<td>In-Class Assignment #3</td>
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<td>Chicanas/os in the U.S. and Caramelo</td>
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**Week 10**

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<td>Wed Oct 25</td>
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**Week 11**

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**Week 12**

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<td>Wed Nov 08</td>
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<td>Fri Nov 10</td>
<td>Veteran’s Day Holiday</td>
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**Week 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon Nov 13</td>
<td>Inclass #4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Nov 15</td>
<td>This is How you Lose Her</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri Nov 17</td>
<td>This is How you Lose Her Read</td>
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<td>29. Pp. 49-87</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Holiday Week</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Nov 20</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>Fri Nov 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td><strong>Week 14</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon Nov 27</td>
<td>This is How you Lose Her Read</td>
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<td>30. Pp. 89-145</td>
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<td>Wed Nov 29</td>
<td>This is How you Lose Her Read</td>
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<td>31. Pp. 147-213</td>
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<td>Fri Dec 01</td>
<td>In-Class Assignment #5</td>
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<td><strong>Week 15</strong></td>
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<td>Mon Dec 04</td>
<td>Meeting with Professor</td>
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<td>Wed Dec 06</td>
<td>Meeting with Professor</td>
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<td>Fri Dec 08</td>
<td>Meeting with Professor</td>
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KEEP TRACK OF YOUR CLASS GRADE POINTS BELOW

FINAL ESSAY (150 PTS)  

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS (400 PTS)
#1  
#2  
#3  
#4  
#5  
Total for (top 4) In-class Assignments  

READING REFLECTIONS (350 PTS)
Week#1  
Week#2  
Week#3  
Week#4  
Week#5  
Week#6  
Week#7  
Week#8  
Week#9  
Week#10  
Week#11  
Week#12  
Week#13  
Total for Reading Reflections  

ATTENDANCE (100 PTS)  

Total points accumulated  

FINAL GRADING SCALE

A  950 points and above  
A-  900-949  (90-94%)  
B+  870-899  (87-89%)  
B  840-869  (84-86%)  
B-  800-839  (80-83%)  
C+  770-799  (77-79%)  
C  740-769  (74-76%)  
C-  700-739  (70-73%)  
D+  670-699  (67-69%)  
D  600-669  (60-63%)  
F  599 and below